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THE GLAD NEW YEAR.

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THE GLAD NEW YEAR,

AND OTHER POEMS.

BY

Ethel^W Wolf.



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EDITOR'S PREFACE.

TO THE WRITER.

THIS little volume is offered for your acceptance in partial fulfilment of my promise that I would, at some time, publish the "effusions," as you used playfully to call them, which you confided to me years ago.

As you had prefixed no heading to the different pieces, and as the distance which separates us has prevented my consulting you on that subject, I hope the arrangement I have made will not be unsatisfactory to you.

I have given the book the title of "The Glad New Year," from the poem which I have placed first in order, as appropriate to the present season ; and I hope you may yet see many new years as glad as you made so many of those of my childhood and early youth.

H. C. A.

1st JANUARY, 1868.

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The Glad New Year.

TOLL, gently toll the passing bell
For the year that dies to-day ;
Ring softly out a last farewell
As it gasps its life away.
Slowly and sadly it parts alone,
Joining the years that are passed and gone,
Sighing for work that it might have done,
And for joys that might have been.
And now the New Year ring in,
Quickly and merrily,
Lightly and cheerily ;
Ere quite the dirge is done
Be the new peal begun,
Lest the glad New Year should know
Aught of the dead one's woe :

Wreathe its young brow with Hope's garland
green ;
But, alas ! for the joys that might have been.

Oh ! brightly glistens the trackless snow,
In the rays of the wintry sun ;
And joyous hearts, in their youthful glow,
Greet the year that is just begun.
But slowly the snow-wreaths melt away,
The ice-drops fall from the leafless spray,
And the winter's white glory is gone,
And the bleak winds whistle and moan,
Coldly and drearily,
Sadly and wearily.
The shivering year looks on
The work that the old has done ;
And a chill strikes to its breast,
With a strange, new fear oppressed.
Alas ! for the sorrow so quickly seen,
And alas ! for the joys that might have been.

Vain fears, vain sorrow ! for quickly, see,
Here cometh the gentle Spring,

And clothes with new verdure each leafless tree,

And round her sweet flowers doth fling.

Kindly she waketh the earth again,

And the year is glad of her joyous reign ;

Then the rosy Summer comes in her train,

And the Autumn brings its store,

And the blest year sighs no more.

Joyfully, hopefully,

Gladly and thankfully,

Bearing the harvest home,

See the tired reapers come ;

And the winter time brings rest,

Cold and dark, but not unblest.

Yet the year, as it dies, sighs the new one in

With alas ! for the joys that might have been.

Thus, for the work that has been done,

And the work that might have been,

Earth has but sighs, as the year is gone,

That in hope and joy came in.

But the last shall usher a glad year in,

Joyful and endless and free from sin ;

Pleasures unfading shall then begin,

And the good seed that on earth was sown
Shall be gathered all ripe and grown,
Safely and carefully,
Gladly and joyfully,
Never to feel again
Earth's wintry fear and pain.
And thus the End shall bring
More than the hopes of Spring ;
Wreaths of fair garlands, than Hope's more green,
More than the joys that on earth might have been.

The Song of Father Christmas.

I ROUSED me from my yearly sleep
And put on my snowy best,
As the morning beams began to peep
And the world arose from its rest.

Their sweetest carols the wild birds sang,
The winter sun shone bright,
And all, as I passed, with my praises rang,
And welcomed me back with delight.

I stopped at the gate of an ancient hall
And gently tapped at the door :
And forth came to meet me, both great and
small,
Fair children and grandsire hoar.

They bade me welcome with smiles of joy,
And blessed my friendly face ;
And their simple pleasure knew no alloy,
For sorrow had there no place.

They spread the board with their goodliest cheer,
They piled the logs on the hearth ;
And all their kindred, from far and near,
They summoned to share our mirth.

We sang and feasted till evening fell,
And then I bade them adieu ;
And a hope there lingered in their farewell
That next year would our pleasure renew.

And for many a year I came again,
And they blessed me and bade me stay ;
And the little children grew up to be men,
And the sire grew each year more grey.

And I came again to that ancient hall,
And gently tapped at the door :
But no glad welcome answered my call,
As had been their wont before.

I knocked again, but no answer came ;
Then I noiselessly opened the door
And silently entered :—the flickering flame
Fell coldly on the floor.

No sound of merriment reached my ear,
And I saw no smiling face ;
But the cold, shrill voice of the dying year
Screamed wildly through the place.

And there sat beside the smouldering fire
A sad and lonely pair ;
And bent with grief was the aged sire,
And the mother was worn with care.

They wept to see me, and sadly thought
Of the days when I came before ;
For they said their sons for their country had fought
And died on a foreign shore.

And their daughter was gone to the spirit-land,
And had left them to mourn alone ;
For there was not one of that little band
In their once so happy home.

I tried to cheer them and soothe their woe ;
I told them their grief was vain,
For the bitterest tears that from sorrow flow
Could not bring them back again.

I bade them think of their glorious deeds
When they fought for their country's fame ;
And I told them that he who for Freedom bleeds
Has earned him a hero's name.

I bade them remember their gentle worth,
Their words and deeds of love ;
And I told them that One who is not of earth
Had prepared them a place above.

And I told of a day, that soon would come,
When their lost ones they should meet ;
And they, in that bright and heavenly home,
Should their parted parents greet.

And, as they listened, they dried their tears,
And they smiled and bade me hail ;
And the fire burned bright and the dark day cleared,
And the wind ceased its mournful wail.

They spread the board, and around it came
The memories of the dead ;
And in the light of the bright fire flame
Each loved one's name they read.

With smiles and tears they welcomed back
The scenes of brighter days ;
And as Memory traced the flowery track
They swelled the note of praise.

And slowly they watched the setting sun,
As his red beams sank to rest ;
And, as they vanished, a bright star shone
Resplendent in the west.

It seemed to point to the spirit-land,
Where those bright seraphs dwell ;
And they thought how their loved ones in glory
stand,
And the endless anthems swell.

Then they turned and blessed me ; and I, they said,
Should still their old friend be :
For, though I cannot restore the dead,
Their memories come with me.

Onward Ever.

ONWARD ever, staying never,
Flows the restless tide away;
Resting never, fleeting ever,
Thus our brightest joys decay !

Hasting ever, reaching never,
See the bubble on the stream ;
Seeking ever, finding never,
Such is youth's too hopeful dream !

Tranquil never, dashing ever,
See the eager waves roll on ;
Craving ever, tasting never,
Soon our longing life is gone !

Resting never, striving ever,
Onward, onward still they flow ;
Onward ever, halting never,
Thus may we life's lesson show !

Home.

THERE is a little English word,—
We love it when we roam—
In other tongues 'tis never heard;
That little word is *home*.

It tells of loving looks and smiles,
Of gentle tones and deeds;
Whose memory still our pain beguiles,
E'en while the reft heart bleeds.

I said *we* love it, yet to me
This word is only dear
For the sake of a false melody
It murmurs in my ear;

That whispers of a memory,
So strangely clear and bright,
Of a far off time that never was,
Save in the shadowy light

Of a soft day-dream that haunts me still,
Wherever my steps may stray ;
A phantom guest that no good or ill
Ever wholly scares away.

I dreamed of it in the night hours,
And I dreamed of it by day ;
And I marvelled what that memory was,
And why it would always stay.

And at last I knew 'twas a memory
Of something that was not yet ;
Like a shadow, cast, not from the past,
But from something that comes to meet.

In hope and fear, in joy and pain,
I sought it everywhere—
The substance whence that shadow came,
So false and yet so dear.

Sometimes my heart beat wild and high,
My hand was stretched to grasp,
As some fair phantom flitted by
That would not 'bide my clasp.

Sometimes my tears fell hopelessly ;
But ever, in my ear,
Rang the old music constantly,
And thrillingly and clear.

And somehow grew within my heart
The thought that it was true ;
That something sang the melody,
And the soft shadow threw.

It was not in the night hour,
It was not in the day;
But in the morning twilight,
When shadows flee away :

I looked, with eyes scarce opened,
I listened wonderingly,
As the shadow grew to substance
And the sound to harmony.

And I knew 'twas Love foreshadowed,
'Twas Love's voice faintly heard,
That had been with me ever,
To guide me when I erred.

And now I love that little word,
I love it while I roam ;
And dearer every day to me
Shall grow that dear word *home*.

The Exile's Grave.

THE SEA, the sea! how I love the sea!
'Tis the only friend that is left to me.
Houseless and homeless I wander on,
My friends all parted, my hopes all gone;
In the wide, wide world I am all alone :
Then I'll seek the sea.

In this rocky cave, by the sea-girt shore,
I'll rest me and list to its ceaseless roar,
And watch the wild heave of its surging breast,
And the dark cold waves with their foamy crest :
'Tis a fitting spot for my lonely rest,
Here beside the sea !

On a seaweed couch, by some mermaid strewn,
The exile shall lay his tired frame down,
By the friendly waves gently sung to sleep,
While o'er my slumbers kind guard they keep.

I have found me a home beside the deep ;
Oh ! I love the sea.

Methinks its waves tell a tale to me
Of friends that I never more may see ;
It echoes the voices I loved so well,
I hear them blend with the ocean-swell,
Gently of kindness and love they tell,
Across the sea.

Oh ! 'tis sweet to list to the waves' wild song ;
But see how fiercely they dash along !
Nearer and nearer the dark waves come,
Rushing so madly and blindly on !
'Twere death to linger ; I must be gone
From the friendly sea.

O Heaven ! I cannot ! they gird me round,
No path is left me, no aid is found ;—
I hear no sound but the rushing wave !
No human arm is near to save.
Oh ! must I indeed find a lonely grave
'Neath the treacherous sea ?

Yet why should I fear it? Earth holds for me
No friend so kind as the deep blue sea;
For some are changed, and some are dead,
And none for me would a warm tear shed.
Then welcome the rest of thy rocky bed,
Thou kindly sea!

For I know that One hath thy wave-path trod,
Whose power can guide through the watery road.
Oh! might I the print of His footsteps see,
Tranquil and safe would my death-sleep be,
Waking at length when he calleth me
Home from the sea.

Yet so hoarsely it raves in its surging flow,
That I fear to its cold, strong arms to go;
And I hear strange voices, its sounds among,
Shrieks of wild anguish from torn hearts wrung,
As a far-off ship goes madly down
'Neath the angry sea.

They are hushed—those wild notes of human woe,
For the lips that breathed them sleep far below.

Hark ! the sea-spirits their requiem sing,
Gently and sweetly their soft notes ring,
And my soul is soothed by that mystic hymn :
Come on, thou Sea !

It comes ! it comes ! they lave my brow,
The waves that gather around me now.
What are those mystic tones I hear ?
What are those strange scenes that seem so near ?
I come ! I come ! no more I fear
Thy rest, O Sea !

I Shall not be Alone.

THERE lay a shadow on my early life,
That ever hid from me the glad sunshine;
And oft I sought, with unavailing strife,
To reach the joyous light that was not mine,
But in my shaded morn it might not shine.
My years went on sadly and listlessly,
Sorrow with sin did ceaselessly entwine,
And oft I wept in lonely misery;
Nor knew I yet that Thou wert still with me.

And now my soul within her prison sits,
And from its window gazes wistfully,
The while Thy furnace fires burn fierce within.
And all unshared her hidden pain must be.
And oft I fear and long despondingly
For word or sign of human sympathy;
So slowly pass the days and wearily,
So utterly alone I seem to be:
Yet am I not alone, but still with Thee.

And, through dim shadows of the days to come,
I seek in vain, with eager straining eyes,
To trace some form outshining from the gloom
Of all that hid within the future lies.

The faint twilight shows not its mysteries,
I know not what that coming time will be,
What woes will overwhelm me or what joys surprise :

But this I know—and 'tis enough for me—
I shall not be alone, but still with Thee.

And onward still to that cloud-hidden river,
Lonely and unexplored, whither I go,
Whither I go alone, and nearer ever
Th' untrodden vale where its cold waters flow,
Whose untold sights and sounds I cannot know;
Or what strange scenes my waking soul will see,
Till the rent veil of life beyond shall show
The unknown spirit-world : enough for me
I shall not be alone, but still with Thee.

Enough for me ! I may not, would not guess
The secrets of that wondrous, vast Forever.

Enough for me, that Thou art there to bless;
Nor aught can me from Thy loved presence sever.
With Thee, no matter how, with Thee forever !
With thee, no matter where, 'tis all to me
That thou art there and here, and leav'st me
never
In life or death. This all my Heaven shall be;
I shall not be alone, but still with Thee !

Hymn to the Holy Trinity.

O God, our Spirit-guide !

Bear with our stubbornness ;
Still in our hearts abide,

Leave us not comfortless.
Guide us to Jesus Christ,
He can for us atone ;
He who our life hath priced
At His most precious own.

O God, our Saviour, Son,
Peer through eternity
Of the Eternal One !

Shield our infirmity.
Plead with Thy Father, God,
That Thou didst die to free
From sin's avenging rod
All who confide in Thee.

O God, our Father! hear
This our repentant cry!
Though Thy just wrath we fear,
We on Thy Word rely.
Here is the Sacrifice
Offered for all mankind;
Let Him for us suffice,
Pardon and Peace to find.

Glory to God, the One
Father Omnipotent!
Glory to God, the Son,
Saviour benevolent!
To God the Spirit, too,
Let equal Glory be!
One God, Eternal, True,
Veiled in the Mystic Three!

Evening Hymns.

I.

SEE, evening's shadows close,
The sun's bright rays are gone ;
And weary hearts repose,
Their day of labor done.
But hopes that once were bright
Fade with the light of day ;
And, into shades of night,
Pass thus, in gloom, away.

Say, will they bloom no more ?
Are they forever fled ?—
Soon morning will restore
The light that now seems dead.
So Hope's bright morning star
Can never know decay ;
But soon will herald from afar
A brighter day.

II.

Softly the vesper bell
Falls on the evening air ;
Sweetly its low tones tell
The hour of prayer.
Day's toil and care are o'er,
Earth's sounds disturb no more ;
Heavenward our spirits soar :
Come to prayer !

Turn we from earth away.
Lord, we Thy blessing pray ;
Oh ! hear, at close of day,
Our evening prayer.
Oh ! guard us while we sleep ;
Kindly and safely keep,
And for Death's slumbers deep
Our souls prepare.

On Earth we'll Meet no More.

FAR o'er the ocean's breast,
Dearest, I go from thee !
Rocked by the waves to rest,
Here must my cradle be.
Yet, though we now must part,
And seas between us lie,
Still, still my constant heart
Feels thou art nigh.

Breathe but a prayer for me ;
So shall our souls unite.
By day I pray for thee ;
I pray and weep by night.
My sad heart feels that here,
On earth, we'll meet no more ;
But parting we'll not fear
On yon blest shore.

The Christian's Light.

LIKE hers—the gentle queen of night—
The Christian's is a borrowed light,
Reflected from the Lord of day;
But, when we turn, in part, away,
Or when some shadow glides between
The soul and his ethereal beam,
Or lost in part, or wholly gone,
Its light, no longer shone upon.

The soul, in this bright mantle drest,
Shines clearest when discerned least;
Self shrouded 'neath His robe of gold,
His glory all that men behold:
When that is drawn in part aside,
How dark the spot it fails to hide!
No longer worn, how sadly seen
The vacant spot where life has been!

Whither ?

THE days of my youth are gone,

Ah ! whither ? whither ?

And my life drifts slowly on,

Ah ! whither ? whither ?

Around me the Autumn's brown leaves are strewn,

The summer birds from their bowers are flown,

And the year drifts swiftly and surely on,

Ah ! whither ? whither ?

The joys of my youth are flown,

Ah ! whither ? whither ?

The light of my life is gone,

Ah ! whither ? whither ?

The bright morn has yielded to stormy night,

Faded and gone is the sun's warm light,

Vanished his last rays from mortal sight,

Ah ! whither ? whither ?

The hopes of my youth are fled,
Ah! whither? whither?
In pitiless haste they sped,
Ah! whither? whither?
Thus the fair blossoms of Spring may die,
Ere they have opened to glad the eye;
Withered and wasted their warm tints fly,
Ah! whither? whither?

“Mourn not the lonely tree,
Now leafless made:
Ere long his boughs shall be
Again arrayed.
To a sunnier clime the birds are gone;
Spring shall restore them, nor these alone.
Learn from the trees and the birds to own
One cares for them and thee.

“The sun, that in clouds to-night goes down,
Will rise to-morrow;
And the bright new day may yet atone
For present sorrow.

And shall not the sunshine of life return,
Soothing the anguish of hearts that mourn,
Blessing the sorrows in patience borne?
There's sunshine yet for thee."

But the hopes of youth, the buds of spring,
Say, where are they?
What season shall their blighted promise bring?
Oh! canst thou say?
"Ask not, but trust. Know this alone,
Life dies not; that which life hath known
Shall live again. Then hope and own
One lives and cares for thee."

Wait.

THE sky was clouded, the wind blew cold,
The stars veiled their silvery light ;
And, in restless fury, the dark tide rolled
On—on through the gloomy night.

I stood on a rock that rose, bare and high,
From the cold, black waves below,
That, dashed into spray, from its bleak sides fly,
Unchecked in their ceaseless flow.

And I mused on my life, that seemed cold and drear,
Like the night and the scene around ;
For no light to guide and no joy to cheer
My restless spirit found.

And I mused and murmured in dull despair,
Till my swimming eyes grew dim ;
And methought I heard the spirits of air
Sing low this simple hymn.

“ Wait, wait ! The night is dark,
But the night dureth not long ;
And soon the voice of the merry lark
Shall warble her matin song.

“ Wait, wait ! The stranded boat
On the sandy beach may lie ;
But the tide has turned, and she soon shall float
O'er the waves right merrily.

“ Wait ! wait, sad child of earth !
Day comes though it dawn not yet :
And thy sun shall rise, and thy bark shall float ;
Then patiently wait, wait ! ”

M. E. T.

With tearful eyes we sadly stood
 Around a dying year,
And watched, in melancholy mood,
 His hour of death draw near.

And, as his life was waning fast,
 With trembling voice he said:
"Oh ! take this gift—my best, my last—
 And love me when I'm dead.

"This babe, when I am gone, shall be
 A woman all shall love ;
And fondly you'll remember me
 All other years above."

And now as each in turn departs
 We bless it, while we sing
His requiem with exultant hearts—
 Of all our years the King.

Break not, Sad Heart.

BREAK not, sad heart !

Full many a bitter tear must yet be shed,
Full many a tender cord lie strained and dead,
Ere thou hast learned, through sorrow's rough
 path led,
How strong thou art.

Death cometh not

At sorrow's call. The wretched cannot die.
Long at his gate the wo-crushed heart must lie,
Till, raised at length, it findeth with a sigh,
 Grief killeth not.

Would'st thou learn why ?

Perfect through suffering must thy weakness be ;
Then, sorrow-taught, thou good in all shalt see,
And joy that not till then was given to thee
 The time to die.

Life.

Down, down, dark and low!
Not under the sea,
For there might be
Some silver phosphor-glow;
Some star-tipped wave
Might lightly lave
And whisper its music over my grave;
But under the ground,
Dark, dark, dark and low,—
Too dark for the wind to blow,
Too dark for a sound,
Too dark to hear,
To weep, to fear,—
There is nothing living or breathing near.

Here must I die! Here, in this dark, cold mine,
My Tree of Knowledge, in whose taste was death!
The sons of toil have met its fate,—but mine
Comes of my wish to know. I spend my breath,
My last, in the rash question, What is Death?

The living death, the sinners call their life;
To them, to me, Death darkly hasteneth:
A few short hours will end our mortal strife,
Here in this darksome shroud that compasseth
Our life—which yet is Life, though thou art come,
O Death!

O Death! O Life! what are ye? One is gone—
Gone swiftly, half unfelt; without my will
It drifted hourly, daily, yearly on
To these last hours—and now the final chill
Creeps coldly on—Death cometh straight to still
My heart's last beating. Here apart I lie,
Far from the rest; and strange wild fancies fill
My dying hour. What can it be to die?
And in my ear strange sounds are echoed shrill,
Till one low whispered voice all other sounds
doth still.

“O Death! O Life! what are ye? say!
Life, thou art Death, and Death is Life;
Death's shadows fall—then melt away
Before the Sun that ends their strife;
For Death is Life.

“Death sows the seed ; Life brings the flower
In that true Life that is to be.
The grave may hide the germ an hour,
Then yields it to Eternity ;
For Death is Life.”

I heard ; and blessed the light that gilds the tomb,—
His Light, who o’er it gained the victory ;
His Life, that lives through all the life to come
In His, who live in him eternally ;
And in that joy I slept, and dreamily
Deep thoughts of earthly life in that last hour
Gave back my life,—for long and wearily
I lay and watched and hoped, till all the power
Of hope was spent. I knew no aid could be—
But now I slept in peace though Death had come
for me.

O’er our bright earth I roved, all green and fair
In that glad Spring I never more should see ;
I breathed the fragrance of her morning air,
I heard sweet birds, in their wild minstrelsy,
Sing forth their joy,—the joy it was *to be*
In such glad life. O earth ! I love thee well !

Thou art so wildly, grandly fair to see!
O Eden! still thy beauties live and tell
Of what thou wert, but never more canst be!
And still the gentle voice sang whispering to me,—

“Stay, gentle flowers! ye are so bright and fair,
I not enough have marked your beauty yet;
I not enough have breathed your perfume rare,
So fresh and sweet, with lingering dew-drops
wet—
Stay! stay! ah, stay!

“Stay, glorious sun! O shorten not my day!
The gladdest, brightest; linger, linger yet!
Too swiftly speed thy hastening hours away,—
Ah! couldst thou once thy setting time forget!
Stay! stay! ah, stay!

“Stay, late-come joy! too soon it seems to part
While yet I scarce have dared believe thee true;
Ah! grant this breathing-time to my worn heart.
Thy transient smiles are vanished as I view:—
Stay! stay! ah, stay!

“They stay not! Gone while yet I tearful plead!
They would not, might not linger—woe is me!
Away, away all bright things ever speed,—
I only left! I left alone to see!
I only stay!

“I will not stay! I too will haste away;
I seek my vanished joy, my faded flowers.
Where is my sun? my yet unfinished day?
In some bright other sphere its wingless hours
Shall ever stay!”

Still in my dreams, I gained the open door
Of a fair temple: entering I found
A learned doctor, with a priceless store
Of books and instruments of names profound,
Scattered in rich profusion all around;
While from his lips there flowed a deep discourse
Of mathematics, metaphysics, all
The secrets of all nature, and the source
Of wisdom, truth, philosophy;—the hall
Rang with his eloquence, which deeply did en-
thral

At first my listening soul, as pleased I heard
With all the wondering crowd. Anon he seemed
To wander into regions unexplored
As yet by simple minds, and then I deemed
That through his brilliant fancies still there
gleamed
A paler light than Truth is wont to show :
Methought he erred, or else perchance he dreamed
Of mysteries too deep for man to know
In this our life. Then in my dream it seemed
He turned and spoke to me, and thus his words I
dreamed :

“ Things which are equal to the same, I say,
Are equal to each other. None can doubt
The certain truth of such a proposition.
Attend, and thou shalt hear how I will prove,
From this one truth, that all things else are false,
Or falsely apprehended by the herd.
When thou art dead, what will remain of thee ?
A handful of poor dust, and nothing more.
For see thy dog, whom now thou scornest, then
By death thine equal rendered, for of him

Dust shall remain as of thy prouder form,
Now fallen to his level. Look around
On all thou seest of rock or flower or tree;
See all things crumbled to their parent dust,
Blown by the wind of life a little space,
Then, when the storm is o'er, cast down again
Upon our mother earth—herself but dust:
Her life the air that in its diverse ways
Doth stir her atoms, shaking them about
In earth, and sea, and man, and beast, and tree;
Wherefore, proud mortal, know thyself but dust,
And dust thy dog; dust the fair flower thou lovest,
And so all equal—dog and flower and thou!
Equal in death, since all are dust,—and so
In life too equal; living dust—no more!
The principle of life that stirs the whole
The same in essence, though its varied forms
Of outward, visible development
Confuse thy shallow brain that sees not where
They meet and all are one.”

“ I cannot prove,
And yet I feel within me something here
I see not in my dog. I am not learned

To demonstrate the truth of that I feel.
Or, if too high my aim should soar, and I
Should seek to use your weapons in my cause,
Too much I fear that I should rather prove
Falsehood than truth—should prove that I myself
Exist not, since I cannot prove I am.
For if all things be false which are not true,
And none be true but those that can be proved,
Then am I but a myth and nothing more,—
For who shall prove I *am* ? It seems, indeed,
To me that 'tis so ; but so often have
The wisest been deceived ; so often I
Have fancied things were other than they were ;
So often dreamed of things I never did,—
Why may not all my life have been a dream,
And I a vain creation of my brain ? ”

“ Hold, foolish youth, for that you truly live
Is proof enough in that you live to dream.
To fancy foolish things within your brain
Doth presuppose the brain where they were bred.”

“ Methinks this argument doth well apply
To all this vast creation and myself ;

For, in that we exist, (which I, unlearned,
Am all unskilled to prove,) this very fact
Doth presuppose, as I have learned from you,
That He existeth, by whose power we are,
And whose high wisdom is wrought out in us,
And whose is all our life, howe'er displayed,—
Though yet I cannot prove His life or mine.
And since He lives and hath declared Himself
In that one book in which is told to us
All that we need to know of Earth or Heaven,
Methinks it were more wise to mark and learn
And hold for truth the truth we cannot prove;
Since in our infant science, yet ungrown
To manly strength, there are no instruments
As yet devised, whose perfect nicety
Can accurately square and compass Truth.
I, in my ignorance and want of skill
To fence with mathematics, logic or
The mysteries of metaphysics,—I
Hold but one simple proposition true:
'It is impossible for the same thing
To be and not to be.' So I, you grant,
Must needs exist. So He who makes my life,
And therefore is, *is*, and must always be

Till He can die. The which, till you can prove,
(Which none can do, nor can it e'er be proved
While any live to prove it,) He must live,
Since it is all impossible for Him
To be and not to be. So in His life
Which only is, and is the source of all,
In it I rest, and find it all I need.
And since He could create, I hold that He
Is able to sustain, and wise enough
To teach me how to live, whose life He gave,
And how to die at last and come to him."

"Fond youth," the grave Professor said, "you err
In thinking me less wise than you in this;
For I have said no word of doubt that He
From whom all life proceedeth ever lives.
Enthroned far above this creature-world
Where rule and reign His wise and perfect laws,
He dwells serene; and, far beneath His feet,
Obedient ebbs and flows the tide of life
In a perpetual motion. 'Twas of thee—
Thee in thy nothingness of atom life—
Of thee I spoke, and told thee thou wert dust.
And for that Book, of which thou spak'st but now,

I never bade thee think of it as false,
But only as transcending thy weak brain,
Which knows not how to tell the false from true
In text or meaning. The great Human mind,
Ripening through ages, hastens to attain
Its fullest growth. Then labors vast and grand
Await its strength mature. Till then we tread
On the threshold of knowledge ; gathering Truth
In fragments here and there, till the great whole
Be piece-meal formed. Then let us join, with care
Reverent, the severed fragments, and know all
That can be known by man."

"Stay, learned sir,
Your wisdom is too eloquent for me,
A simple youth. And yet to me it seems
There might be found a shorter, safer way
To reach the summit of the hill of Truth,
By the firm-planted steps His care hath placed
Who knew our weakness, than by slow degrees
Of deep-cut roads by human skill designed,
To labor round the circuit of our life,
And having reached (if haply reached at last),
Though late, the highest point, look down to see

How easily and shortly, though perchance
The ascent were somewhat rugged, might have been
The height attained, and there life's work begun
Which our late reaching left no time to do.
It seems to me that each man's proper sense
Is wiser and more precious far to him
Than all the reasoning of all the schools.
By his own consciousness he knows he lives ;—
He needs no arguments to prove him that,
Or that he grows and eats and sleeps and feels.
God speaks to each man's conscience, nor he needs
Much foreign aid to come between his soul
And God his Maker. For He writes so plain,
All but the wise can plainly understand.
What if, receiving in my father's hand
Written, a letter of some vast import,
Concerning me to haste and do some work
Which failing would involve some consequence
Of life and death :—what think you if I should,
(Knowing the writing such as from my youth
I ever saw from him) I should with care
Consult some learned professor of the law
Whether the hand were genuine ? What if he,
Acknowledging the writing, should employ

His learned skill and all the time I had
To do the weighty business it enjoined,
In showing how the words might be construed
To mean some other sense than that I knew
My father would convey :—till I at last
Should almost come to wonder what he meant,
And view the letter as some wondrous piece
Of curiosity, whose sense might be
Or anything, or nothing, at my will?
Would not the letter still be simple, true,
And easily discerned? And for the work
I was too wise to understand to do,
Thus left undone,—were not the fault my own?
And I, for all my learned pains, a fool?"

Methought ev'n as I spoke I heard the bell
That marked the hour of study. From his
chair
Rose the Professor, and, while yet there fell
The echo of his footsteps on my ear,
A reverend Father entered. He did bear
Within the circle of his arms a load
Of dusty tomes, and in the vacant chair
Did gravely seat himself; his black robes flowed

In sombre majesty. With reverent air
He solemnly discoursed in words and gestures
fair.

“ My friends, I come, with what success I may,
To counteract the poisonous tendency
Of my most learned brother's eloquence ;
By which, if you should be unhappily
Led into error (as, alas ! alas !
Too many oft have been), you yet may learn
By careful study of the Fathers, here
Taught and explained by me, (unworthy I
Of such high honor and great privilege)
May learn, I say, how widely he has erred
From truth as taught by our dear Mother Church,
To whose grave judgment and ripe wisdom all
The wise and faithful of all ages have
Justly deferred. And you must do the same
If you would live serene and peaceful die.
In these most venerable volumes see
The treasured wisdom of that purer age,
(Ere torn as now by heresies and schisms) ;
Our Mother Church, one then, as ever one,
Covered her children with her sheltering wing
And taught them doctrine pure.”

“ But, Father, say,
How were the Fathers of that happy time
So guarded from all error, and so sure
That all they taught was only simple truth ?
How came it then that they were not agreed
Amongst themselves ? but those most holy men,
If history say true, did soon begin
To quarrel and dispute, ev’n as we do,
We, in this darkened and degenerate age ?
Methinks ’twere easier to understand
Scripture itself than those deep commentaries
Which need themselves to be explained to us,
Who, being ignorant to guide ourselves,
Lack wisdom, as I think, to choose our guides,
Themselves not always wise.”

“ My son, beware,
Nor trust thyself on such a dangerous sea
Without a compass ; lest some swelling wave,
Lashed into fury by the sudden storm,
Swamp thy frail bark presumptuous. Know, my
son,
The Church is one. She holds the keys of life
And death : all knowledge dwells alone with her.

Boldly to reason it becomes not thee,
And thus to argue, as if thou could'st find
Truth for thyself. 'Tis thine, my son, to obey.
Think what thou art—an erring mortal man!
Be humble and be wise."

" My Father, I
Would know the truth and meekly bow to it.
But sure, though Reason guiding, proud, alone,
May lead astray, yet, when the truth is found,
She is not then forbid to apprehend
The light revealed she was too weak to find
Unaided. Reverent I would gaze and muse
On sacred wisdom: and, as still I gazed,
New beauties should arise, unmarked before;
Bending still lower, and yet lower, till
The growing light should make me blush for shame
That I should be so ignorant, so vile,
So wholly insufficient to myself,
So worthless to all other; till at last,
In self-forgetfulness my 'raptured soul
"Grew pure by being purely shone upon."

I ceased and woke. I hear! I come, O Death!

I die to live. Blest Life that cannot die !
For death is all of earth. This trembling breath
Is all I lose. O earth ! my latest sigh
Is all I give to thee. I but lay by
A robe I need no more. I little know
Of that fair world I enter, Death, by thee ;
Led by thy friendly hand I gladly go
My home, my life, my all of good to see.
Thou art a friend, O Death ! thou bringest life to
me !

Still the voice sang : " Oh ! not with my eyes,
They see too dimly for aught so bright !
But in the still depth of my soul there lies
A new, sixth sense that has seen thy light—
Thy light, O Life !

" Oh ! truer, truer than aught of earth,
Glad sights and sounds of the spirit-land !
They tell me that death is an hour of birth.
I hear life's wave as it laves the strand
Whither I go !

“I go to know that the stars told true ;
I go to know that the word was plain ;
'Tis earthly wisdom that blinds our view ;
It makes the darkness, its fears are vain,
I see, I see ! ”

IMITATIONS.

Dream Echoes.

DREAMS, hopeless dreams! I marvel whence ye come.
Dreams from the shadows of the heart's recess
Glide spectre-like and shrouded through the soul,
Haunting its vacant chambers evermore,
And tuning their wild echoes to a dirge.

O love and joy! the substance of our dreams,
Shadows no more, nor echoes of past days,
Nor shrouded spectres gliding fearfully,
But dwelling ever in the gladdened heart
That knows no sigh for days that are no more.

God's Mirror.

Oh ! might I see,
As in a glass, the glory of thy love :
That so on me,
Thy light reflected, I to men might prove
A mirror that might something show of Thee.

Fain would I gaze
Unwearied, till I gazed all self away,
That so Thy praise
I might in every act and word display,
And Thou in me live only all my days.

So, through my heart,
Thy love unchecked, unceasingly should flow :
This all my part—
The glad possession evermore to know,
And then to all the living joy impart.

Oh ! might it be !
O Thou that dwellest in the gardens, hear !
Grant this to me,
Cause me to hear Thy voice, to feel Thee near,
That so I may forget all self in thee !

My All.

WHEN once my soul has fled to Thy embrace
I have no danger left to fear ;
With Thee in every time and place
And sheltered everywhere.

The life eternal is begun for me
When once Thou givest me to know Thy love :
On earth by faith I live with Thee ;
Thou art my Heaven above.

Thou art my all, and I am Thine alone,
I have no longer any part in me ;
'Tis Thine to care for and protect Thine own :
'Tis mine to trust in Thee.

Thou art my Life in life ; in death Thou art
Still, still my life, and evermore shalt be.
My failing flesh, my sinking heart
Are naught—Thou livest for me.

A. M. A.

As dawns the day
After some long, tempestuous night,
Breaking but slowly on our sight,
Fitfully shining through clouds and rain,
Which yet may gather not again
 To quench its ray;
So dawn thy life-day, clear and bright,
Triumphing over the vanquished night;
 Full of bright flowers
 And sunny hours,
 Whose gentle showers
Shall only make them grow more fair.

The Isle of Portsea.

Know ye an isle where proud Britain's defenders
Rest from their labors and cease from their strife;
Where each brave warrior gladly surrenders
War's rude alarms for a peaceable life?
Soldiers and sailors both gladly contribute
To her adornment their laurels and bays;
And, in return for their dutiful tribute,
England's proud banner she fondly displays.
This heaven-favored spot is the Isle of Portsea.
How blest must its happy inhabitants be!
Yet these, in such glory unworthy to dwell,
Know no music so sweet as the dear word, "Fare-
well!"

Sweet island! where nor cares nor toil distress,
But ease and indolence combine to bless.
Here patriot zeal and proud ambition sleep,
No vigils here nor weary guard they keep.
By duty's voice nor glory's call opprest,
In this loved spot no sound shall break their rest.

Four townships are within the isle contained,
Landport, Portsea, Portsmouth, and Southsea,
named.

The former three in commerce have surpassed,
While fashion and *haut ton* select the last.
These as a whole for brevity unite,
And we as Portsmouth the whole district write.

Her foes with fear and reverence to inspire,
And teach the awe-struck stranger to admire,
Proud England's forts he first with wonder sees,
And notes their curtains, bastions and glacis ;
These to the world her vaunted strength display
And warn her enemies to keep away.
But humbly entering at the nearest gate,
To take a nearer view of so much state,
Far different scenes salute his wondering eyes.
The varied landscape wakens his surprise.
Scarlet and green the gorgeous scene adorn,
(More sober tints the builder viewed with scorn) ;
The streets with endless grace their course pursue,
(No mathematics their projector knew,
Unskilled sharp angles or straight lines to trace,
Nor squares nor parallels his taste disgrace) ;

Begun and ended how and where they can,
They speak their architect no common man.
Here, slow meandering with unguided tread,
Through devious paths his weary steps may thread
Each narrow street, each winding lane explore,
To find himself just where he was before.

Stop! for our tread is on forbidden ground.

In praise or blame we may no further go.
Who dares to censure ever wrong is found,
At least for knowing what he should not
know:
Learn we, while all with their loud praises
glow,
In this short maxim all their secret lies,—
“Where ignorance is bliss ’tis folly to be
wise.”

Sleepy Sentiments.

SORT died away the hum of day,
Soft fell night's shadows round,
Soft melted toils and cares away,
Like dews within the ground.
The gentle rays that Dian lent,
Through my uncurtained window sent,
So shyly seemed to peep,
So sweetly fell that witching hour
On every sleeping tree and flower,
That I—went off to sleep.

So ripplingly, so tunefully
The river seemed to glide ;
So silently, so peacefully
The silver rays replied,
As if they whispered through the night
The burden of those visions bright
In mortal dreams that fall,—
Sweet thoughts that poets love to hoard,
But I—went off to sleep, and snored,
And did not dream at all.

And what though night may not endure
To brook the dawn of day?
The fair young moon, so fresh and pure,
May well excuse her stay;
The rosy glories of the east,
To poets' eyes so rich a feast,
—They did not shine on mine;
The risen sun will light my way
Though longer I may sleep than they,
And rise at half-past nine.

Ⓞ Soul! Too Sad to Live!

O SOUL! too sad to live, too weak to die!
Go seek a spot
To hide thee, where the world's obtrusive eye
May find thee not.

Then, though thou be unnoticed and alone,
Thy troubled ear
Shall catch no more the cold, unfeeling tone
That rends it here.

Nor, weighing heavy on thy heaving breast,
Shall evermore
Welch rarebits rob thee of thy rightful rest,
As heretofore.¹

¹ See Appendix, Note 1.

Translations from the French.

FROM LAMARTINE'S "JOCELYN."

WITH bursting heart I reach my humble door.
There, as I slowly tread with toilworn feet,
A gentle whine is the sole sound to greet.
My faithful dog, beneath my window crouched,
Watching my coming, barked as I approached ;
His master's cares had worn him thin and old,
And now his bark my only welcome told.
Martha sat at her wheel, all lonely there ;
She dropped the reel, it rolled upon the stair :
She glanced around, and then, as if her eye
Had read my heart, she rose and silently
Opened my chamber door. The dog ran on ;
We stood within, my dog and I, alone.
Frisking around me, with his mute caress,
He strove to soothe my utter loneliness ;
Licking my passive fingers o'er and o'er,

Bounding from bed to chair, from sill to floor,
He seemed even to the very walls to tell
His joy to see the friend he loved so well.
Now on my dusty trunk he lays him down
And with keen eyes he seems to read my own.
Forgive me, ye whose utter loneliness
Is even unshared by such a friend as this,
Forgive that at the glance of those mute eyes
Quick to my own the ready tear-drops rise !
Now swells his neck with joy to my embrace,
And my warm tears are shed upon his face.
O poor and only friend ! come, let us love,
Taught by that instinct lent us from above
Which leaves this comfort still, if only this,
Where God hath placed two hearts to love is bliss.

Alas ! to gain alone a desert home,
To see no window opening as you come ;
Nor think, as first the distant roof you see,
“ Some heart within will joy to welcome me :
Some sister, mother, wife, some friend at least,
Counts even the few remaining steps that rest ;
And soon the joyful welcome shall resound
And love and peace my entering steps surround.”

Alone to enter, and in silence glide
Through the lone court where sounds no step beside
While of the echoes of that happier time
Not one repeats that trembling voice of thine;
And thy lone grief, thy weary heart's unrest,
O'erflows no more within a kindred breast—
Save only in thy dog's! whose ear alone
Has caught thy step to bark thy welcome home.
To have but this one heart in unison,
Your thoughts reflected here, and here alone;
That only eye to mark your stay or go,
To note your tears and wonder why they flow,
To watch you and return your seeking glance,
To whom alone your loss were true mischance,—
'Tis sad perhaps, yet still 'tis sadly sweet!

Poor dog! God only knows how near they meet,
My soul and thine. He only knows how far
Beneath my own thy gentle instincts are;
Knows, too, how thou, by some mysterious tie,
Livest in my life, and in my death must die,
And by what pity He thy heart doth guide
To love me still—now loved by none beside!

FROM "LA HENRIADE."

Two gentle friends to mortals Heaven hath sent
To cheer our sorrows, soothe our discontent;
Eternal pledges of His power to bless,
Supports in toil and treasures in distress:
A grateful shade, a ray from Heaven's light cast,
Kind Sleep the former, gentle Hope the last.
The one, when, wearied with the toils of day,
Her strength o'ertaxed, the failing frame gives way,
Aids sinking Nature with a sweet repose
And lends forgetfulness to hide her woes.
The other warms and guides our slow desire,
Kindles within the soul a heaven-lit fire;
And, tending ever to its parent light,
Ev'n in deceiving gives a true delight.
A special mission to some hearts she bears,
Inspires no short-lived joy in hearts like theirs:
God's promise and His aid in her combine,
Like Him immortal—and of Him divine.

A P P E N D I X .

Note 1. This poem was one of the earlier productions of the writer.
The third verse originally stood thus (the circumstances under which it was composed were of extreme melancholy):

And envy, jealous of the race more blest,
 Shall nevermore
Disturb the quiet of thy gloomy rest
 As heretofore.

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